

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today paid tribute to the life and work of Rosa Lee Parks by proposing legislation that would create a life-size statue of her to be placed in the U.S. Capitol's Statuary Hall.

Jackson said she was deserving to stand alongside other great Americans because this "quiet but courageous woman sat down against injustice which allowed a mass civil rights movement to stand up for justice. She was a small woman who had a large impact!"

Jackson continued, "Rosa Parks was more than the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." Her dignified leadership inspired others to engage in courageous acts - for example, the young man who stood in front of the tank in Tiananmen Square. Nelson Mandela knew of her actions before he spent 27 years in a South African jail. She burst on the scene before Pope John Paul II was able to use his pontifical office to oppose communism. And when those in Eastern Europe struggling for independence from the Soviet Union sang 'We Shall Overcome,' they were paying tribute to Rosa Parks.

"Believing in American democracy she affirmed that one person - without money or military might - could make a difference. In the face of danger, entrenched racism, a "states' rights" philosophy - and a belief by many that any effort toward civil rights for "Negroes" was communist inspired - this graceful woman acted with the courage of a lion, and out of a grassroots bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama came a young man, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a mass movement to end legal apartheid in America.

"Rosa Parks took the legal principle of "equal protection under the law" *for all Americans* in the 1954 *Brown*

decision and applied it to public transportation - which eventually led to a 1964 Civil Rights Act, a 1965 Voting Rights Act and a 1968 Open Housing Act, all of which helped to build a more perfect union among the states and make America better.

"Do we memorialize her with tributes like this around the nation? Absolutely. But it also occurred to me that there are few statues of people of color and women in the Capitol. I think Rosa Parks deserves to be honored with a statue in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol and, therefore, today I

Jackson Proposes To Honor Rosa Parks With Capitol Statue

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introduced H.R. 4145, legislation to design, sculpture and place her among the greats who have helped to make America and the world a better place in which to live. I think that is the most appropriate way to permanently memorialize Rosa Parks," Jackson concluded.